

Skateboard Advisory Committee
January 7, 2016
Parks & Recreation Office

Skateboard Advisory Committee Members Present: Thomas Bubier, Michael Cannon, James Duane, Betty Funk, Robert McArthur, James McCarthy, Joan Rastani, Jason Smith, Cheryl Tully Stoll

Others: Thomas Begin, and James Snyder - Please see attached sign-in sheet;

Members Absent: Kathy Hauck

Chairman Jason Smith called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and read the agenda into record.

Site Selection Discussion

Committee Member James Duane discussed a draft report compiled by Pillar Design, titled *Framingham Skatepark: Site Selection and Feasibility Study* that was handed out during the meeting. This report was submitted by Pillar Design earlier today and Mr. Duane had only been able to give the document a cursory review. He suggested that the Committee review this document to see if it appropriately captures the essence of what the Committee has done to date in terms of providing guidance to Pillar, and to see whether Pillar's opinion holds water with regards to what the Committee is expecting from a site selection standpoint. He explained that this document is an opinion from the designer to the Committee and the Committee should review it to ensure findings are aligned with the Committee's collective views and expectations. From his initial review, the report hits all the high notes and gives a good analysis from the designers view point on what each site offers and doesn't offer and ultimately states that the final decision on site selection rests with the Committee. He further explained that the report contains their matrix system for reviewing and rating a site, and gives a recommendation on selection. He found it interesting that the report identified all the sites as viable locations for a skatepark amenity. Some rate significantly higher based upon current conditions, amenities currently offered, location, etc., with all four locations being suitable for some sort of skatepark amenity. The final recommendation contained within the report identified Farm Pond South as the more appealing location for the first skatepark due to its proximity to signalized crosswalks, close to various amenities at Longs Complex, Loring Arena, and Cushing Memorial Park, close to bathroom facilities at Longs Complex and Loring Arena, plenty of parking close by, near public transportation, and closely located to Downtown. Farm Pond North was listed as the second choice. Chairman Smith will add the review and discussion of this document to the next meeting's agenda and asked the Committee to review the document in preparation for that meeting.

Committee Member Robert McArthur explained to the Committee that there are Conservation Commission and the State's Natural Heritage Program concerns along Farm Pond. While he has not heard back from Natural Heritage, it is his opinion that the concern is due to the fact that sedge, a rare grass growth, occurs along the shoreline of Farm Pond and Farm Pond South. This type of growth occurs in 9 locations throughout the State and is regulated and monitored by the State's Natural Heritage Program. Mr. Duane further explained that Mr. McArthur and his staff have reached out to the Natural Heritage Program and requested a formal opinion on this location and growth. However, he believes that Pillar has identified locations along this area for a potential skatepark that would not impact any Conservation Commission buffer zone or Natural Heritage areas of concern.

Next Steps

Mr. Duane explained that Pillar Design's expectation was that the Committee would review this document and provide Pillar with any appropriate feedback. Once that has occurred, Pillar will incorporate the feedback into an official document and submit that to the Committee. Mr. Duane explained that he has reached out to three design companies who typically commission geotechnical testing in an effort to gain an idea of a potential cost range and timeframe for testing. He found that companies are typically booking testing two-weeks out from the date from which they are given the go-ahead. In addition, the general price range for testing is between \$4,500- \$7,500, which was a little higher than what he expected. Most companies will sub out the actual drill rigs but supply their own scientist to administer the testing. Mr. Duane explained he had contacted David Foss at Wilcox and Barden, Cheri Ruane at Weston & Sampson, and Fuss & O'Neil, to gain price ranges and timeline estimates for testing. In addition to these three companies, the Town might also have the chance to work with AE Com who is currently doing the testing at Mary Dennison Park. However, he is a little leery of having them work on a second project while Mary Dennison is ongoing in an effort to maintain their focus on Mary Dennison. Mr. Smith asked if the Town had worked previously with any of these companies and if weather would have any impact on potential testing. Mr. Duane explained that the Town has at one time or another worked with each company and/or a representative at that company on various projects. In addition, he explained that weather can have an impact on testing due to potential ground frost. At this time, there is a shallow frost, which would not dramatically impact testing. However, as the frost progresses the window for testing will decrease.

Committee Member Michael Cannon asked if the Committee intends to move quickly to which Mr. Duane explained that the sooner the Committee has a formal opinion on a location, the sooner he can move forward with gaining a scope of work from Pillar Design and hiring a geotechnical testing company. However, knowing that weather can be an issue, and knowing that the Committee has identified a target "asking" amount of Town Meeting, he believes the Committee can move forward building a packet with the target "asking" amount and submit it to Town Meeting as a placeholder. In the spring, they would then be in position to go out and accomplish what they need to do in terms of geotechnical testing and still be in a good place for Town Meeting. By the time the project is up for review by Fin Com, Ways & Means, Capital Budget, and other Town Meeting Committees, there should be substantial information outside of possibly the geotechnical testing information.

Mr. Cannon asked if Mr. Brad Siedlecki, Pillar Design, had given any downside to a potential skatepark at Mary Dennison to which Mr. Duane explained that due to the current environmental conditions at Mary Dennison, and outstanding design issues, Mary Dennison is not an ideal location for the first skatepark. However, during the design process a skatepark could be identified as a potential cap for environmental remediation. Mary Dennison is also an ideal location for a future skatepark as a result of its location within a densely populated residential area, and the large amount of amenities located within walking distance to the park.

The Committee discussed Farm Pond South and how they believe it is a great fit for a skatepark, especially with the large number of amenities close by.

Chairman Smith announced that the next meeting will be Thursday January 21st at 7pm.

Review/Approval of December 3, 2015 and December 17, 2015 Minutes

December 3, 2015

The Committee discussed grammatical and substance additions/changes to the minutes. Ms. Judith Grove, former Skatepark Advisory Committee Member, asked the Committee to include an addition to the minutes in the paragraph in which she offered her resignation:

“In addition, Ms. Grove takes exception with how the Committee was formed. In particular, she believes that the Parks Commission had voted for the appointees to this Advisory Committee by secret ballot. She discussed her objections to the State Attorney General, and as a result of her objections, the Parks Commission then re-voted for who they were appointing to the Advisory Committee. She stated that she felt it was unfair that Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Bubier, and she were the only people who had to come in front of the Parks Commission to be appointed to the Committee. She also objected that, in her opinion, there was not a parent of a skater on the Advisory Committee.”

Chairman Smith also asked that a copy of the Town Meeting article that outlines how the Skatepark Advisory Committee shall be formed is included with the minutes.

Committee Member Michael Cannon moved to approve the minutes of December 3, 2015 with all edits given during the meeting; Committee Member Robert McArthur seconded the motion; the Committee voted 10-0-0 for said motion.

December 17, 2015

The Committee discussed grammatical and substance additions/changes to the minutes.

Committee Member Michael Cannon moved to approve the minutes of December 17, 2015 with all edits given during the meeting; Committee Member Joan Rastani seconded the motion; the Committee voted 9-0-1 (Robert McArthur abstained) for said motion.

Mr. Harold Geller, Ways & Means, asked the Committee to give their reasoning's for selecting the higher quoted designer in the RFQ (Request For Qualifications) process. Chairman Smith explained seven Committee Members voted for Pillar Design and each has their own reasons why they did so. He

welcomed Mr. Geller to ask each member that voted for Pillar to give their reasoning after the meeting. Mr. Lloyd Kaye, Town Meeting Member, asked the Committee to answer his question he has previously asked of the Committee. He requested that the Committee address why they selected the higher priced designer as a result of the RFQ process.

Committee Member Michael Cannon moved to adjourn at 7:44 pm; Committee Member Joan Rastani seconded the motion; the Committee voted 10-0-0 for said motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Begin

The following documents were distributed to each of the SAC members during the meeting and are available at the Park & Recreation Administration Offices:

1. Draft Letter of Support for Parks & Recreation's CDBG Grant Application for supplemental funding for a Skatepark, 12-6-2015
2. Draft Framingham Skatepark Site Selection and Feasibility Study, Pillar Design Studios, LLC, January 7, 2016

Skatepark Advisory Committee

January 7th, 2016 Meeting

Sign-In Sheet

Name

Ronda H. Andrews

Jim Pillsbury

GEORGE LEWIS

HAROLD GELLER

GLORIA GELLER

Kathy Vassar

Judy Grove

Tom Grove

Belinda MacDonald